

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the “admitted prior art and European Patent WO 98/14002.”

Claims 2 and 3 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have cancelled claim 1 and amended claims 2 and 3 to rewrite these claims in independent form in accordance with the Office Action’s indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claims 2 and 3 remain pending for consideration.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the “admitted prior art and European Patent WO 98/14002.” Claims 2 and 3 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants have cancelled claim 1 and amended claims 2 and 3 to rewrite these claims in independent form in accordance with the Office Action’s indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that newly-amended independent claims 2 and 3 are now in *prima facie* condition for allowance in light of the Office Action’s indication. Withdrawal of the objection to these claims is thus respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP

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By:


Paul A. Fournier
Reg. No. 41,023

Customer No. 023973

Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
1500 K Street, N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005-1209
Tel.: (202) 842-8800
Fax: (202) 842-8465